

CLAIM AMENDMENTS:

1. (Original) A water-soluble polymer, which has a calcium ion scavengeability of not less than 0.40 and further has a clay dispersibility of not less than 0.50 in high-hardness water.

2. (Original) A water-soluble polymer according to claim 1, which comprises a water-soluble poly(carboxylic acid)-based polymer having a structural unit derived from a monoethylenically unsaturated monocarboxylic acid (or salt) monomer and/or a structural unit derived from a monoethylenically unsaturated dicarboxylic acid (or salt) monomer.

3. (Original) A water-soluble polymer according to claim 1, which comprises a polymer mixture including polymers A and B as essential components wherein the polymer A has a calcium ion scavengeability of not less than 0.45 and wherein the polymer B has a clay dispersibility of not less than 0.65 in high-hardness water, wherein the polymer mixture has physical properties such that the calcium ion scavengeability is not less than 0.40 and that the clay dispersibility is not less than 0.60 in high-hardness water.

4. (Original) A water-soluble polymer according to claim 2, which comprises a polymer mixture including polymers A and B as essential components wherein the polymer A has a calcium ion scavengeability of not less than 0.45 and wherein the polymer B has a clay dispersibility of not less than 0.65 in high-hardness water, wherein the polymer mixture has physical properties such that the calcium ion scavengeability is not less than 0.40 and that the clay dispersibility is not less than 0.60 in high-hardness water.

5. (Original) A water-soluble polymer according to claim 3, wherein the mixing ratio by weight of polymer A/polymer B is in the range of 20/80 to 95/5.

6. (Original) A water-soluble polymer according to claim 4, wherein the mixing ratio by weight of polymer A/polymer B is in the range of 20/80 to 95/5.

7. (Original) A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 1.

8. (Original) A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 2.

9. (Original) A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 3.

10. (Original) A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 4.

11. (Original) A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 5.

12. (Original) A detergent composition, which comprises the water-soluble polymer as recited in claim 6.

13. (New) A water-soluble polymer according to claim 1, wherein said clay dispersibility is determined in high-hardness water having a calcium concentration of 200 ppm in terms of calcium carbonate.